TWO LETTERS,

SEVERALLY ADDRESSED TO

THE EDITOR OF

THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER

AND THE

EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN REMEMBRANCER,

RELATIVE TO THE

SLAVE-CULTURED ESTATES

OF THE

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

BY THE REV. JOHN RILAND, M. A.

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LONDON:

JOHN HATCHARD AND SON, 187 PICCADILLY.

MDCCCXXVIII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT having been represented to the writer of the following Letters, that a reprint of the first of them, from the January Number of the Christian Observer, accompanied with the prefatory remarks and notes of the Editor of that periodical, which he has kindly allowed to re-appear in their present form; and that a publication also of the writer's defensive address to the Christian Remembrancer, which the conductors of that publication declined to insert; might assist in calling the attention of the members of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to their Slave Estates in Barbadoes; the author offers these few pages to public consideration. All anxiety to vindicate himself from the aspersions of an anonymous opponent he desires to forget, in his wish to have the question itself impartially investigated; with a view, either to prove that the Corporation has done all that *can* possibly be effected for their Slaves, or to stimulate its Agents, without farther delay, to carry on to perfection the work of improvement, with a view to a safe but a certain emancipation of their bondsmen. If he is asked, What can the Society properly do in this respect? he would first inquire, "*What has it already done?*" Have those who manage the Codrington estates fully adopted, as a commencement of their benevolent labours, the reforms proposed by the Government? Have they provided adequate means of *education* and religious instruction to their slaves? If so, let them specify the hours of instruction, the names and numbers and sex of the pupils; the kind of instruction—its progress; the names of their adult Slaves, who, after more than a hundred years of possession, can read their Bibles; the names and number of their schoolmasters, and how long they have been employed. To secure the due observance of the Sabbath, what equivalent time have they given the Slaves for marketing and cultivating their provision grounds? What have they done as to marriage? Let them produce the regulations of the estate on this subject. Have they established a Savings Bank, and taken pains to teach the Slaves its use, and to encourage their accumulation of property, with a view to purchase their freedom? Have they given to them a right of redeeming themselves, or any of their family, with the fruits of their industry and savings? What precise limits have they affixed to arbitrary punishments by their managers, overseers, and drivers? Have they abolished female flogging, and what is the substitute? Have they abolished the use of whips and cats in the field, as a stimulus to labour? Have they adopted any plan of substituting wages for coercion? How much land have they allotted to each Slave for his own use, and what time, as before asked, do they allow for cultivating it? As to the labour exacted from the Slaves, let them produce the series of journals of plantation labour for the last twenty years, and state in what manner the fruit of their toils has been expended? Has it been laid out for the benefit of the Slaves themselves, to enable them gradually to purchase their freedom? or been expended on a college for White inhabitants? I might ask various other questions, of which these are a sample, and to which the members of the Society themselves, no less than the British public, will expect a specific answer. Let it be seen distinctly what has been already done, and then it may easily be pointed out what remains to be achieved.

To introduce the following letter which we have received from the Rev. J. Riland, it is necessary to state, that in the last Number of the Christian Remembrancer appeared a Review of the Rev. D. Wilson's "Thoughts," on Slavery, and a long letter to the Editor by S. H. P., animadverting upon some statements made by Mr. Riland in his "Memoirs of a West-Indian Planter," and on others by the Christian Observer relative to the slave estates of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

Our readers are aware that we have several times expressed an earnest wish for more ample and specific information than we have been yet able to obtain relative to the Codrington estates in Barbadoes, which have been held for more than a century by the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. In our Number for last May (p. 316), in noticing the highly interesting Report read and the addresses delivered at Freemasons' Hall, we lamented the total silence which prevailed on this subject. In January last (C.O. p. 58), we had also made the same complaint relative to the society's last year's Report. We might add, that the new Report, just published, is equally barren of tangible specific details, such as the society are accustomed to give respecting their other stations. The notice this very year is only the same, word for word, which has been published year after year for many years, without a tittle of new matter. It tells us, indeed, that a minister "*has* been provided for the Negroes, whose whole attention *is* to be" ["*is*" still in 1827 just as it was, "is," in 1820, the last Report that happens to be before us, and we know not how much longer back —"is to be," after more than a century of responsible occupation, and after generation upon generation has passed away into eternity] "to their improvement in moral and religious knowledge;" that "schools upon the national system *have been* formed;" that "time *will be* ["will," still in 1827, just as it was in 1820, and we know not how many years before] allowed to the Negroes during the week for the cultivation of their own provision grounds;" but no definite results—no list of the baptized, the married, the catechumens, the communicants, as in other stations; no notice of how many children and adults actually attend the schools and can read; how much time is allowed for instruction, and many other particulars necessary to be known. But we must not enlarge upon this part of the subject in these preliminary remarks; our object at present being only to introduce Mr. Riland's letter.

Mr. Riland, it seems, had lamented these deficiencies, like ourselves; and had thought with us, that the friends of the society, that our prelates, and clergy, and munificent laity, had a right to demand from their West-India agents a more specific account of these matters; and he had accordingly expressed his opinions in his "Memoirs of a West-India Planter." His statements, as well as those in the Christian Observer, S.H.P., in the Christian Remembrancer, has undertaken to refute.

We had intended to have taken up the question somewhat at large in our present Number, so far as our own share of S. H. P.'s censure is concerned, being sincerely thankful

to him, though his tone is not very friendly towards us, that he has opened the way for a discussion highly important, especially to the friends and members of the society. We would hope to convince even our brother Editor, to the much improved tone of whose work we most gladly bear witness, and whom we are far from censuring for opening his pages for the discussion, provided he does so impartially on all sides of the subject; that his correspondent S. H. P. has not given, by any means, a just statement of the matters in question: and, above all, that it is an unjust and fearful thing to make the Gospel of our Redeemer an abettor of West-India slavery. We hope to convince him that West-India slavery is an utterly unchristian institution; and to point out the duty of the society to expurgate itself from its share of the guilt, (for the British public now know and feel that guilt is involved in *voluntary* slave-holding, unaccompanied by wise and provident, but effectual, steps towards emancipation), by making its agents do far more than, from any thing in the Report, we can learn they have yet done towards constituting their slaves free Christian villagers, labouring for hire upon their estates; "not using their service without wages, but giving them for their work." But again we must check our pen for the present, leaving Mr. Riland to his own defence; and reserving ours, if defence be needed, to a future Number. We only lament that S. H. P. should have allowed himself, we would hope unintentionally, to make our work appear hostile to the Society itself, when every candid reader must see that our only object was that its members should really know how their own affairs stand, and be enabled to convey to their own slaves in Barbadoes the same blessings, temporal and spiritual, which they wish to secure for the natives of India or North America.

The Rev. J. Riland to the Editor of the Christian Observer.

As you have been the immediate though innocent cause, by reviewing my work, of my exposure to the attack of a writer under the signature of S. H. P., in the Christian Remembrancer, you will, perhaps, have the kindness to allow me an opportunity of explanation. We are, indeed, on this occasion, fellow-sufferers; and this must be my excuse, if, in the course of the following remarks, I should venture, indirectly, to include yourself, in an apology for the editor of Memoirs of a West-India Planter.

I. I certainly said, that Mr. Coleridge found, in 1825, a *driver* on the Barbadoes estate of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; but I never cast a slur upon the Society, by calling it "a Christian corporation, which retains an estate worked under the whip." Yet these words are formally marked by S. H. P. as a quotation. What I did say referred to the state of things in 1793; when Bryan Edwards defended a Christian corporation which, unquestionably, *at that time*, "worked its estate under the whip." But our accuser says, "The whip is gradually falling into disuse; and, in most well-ordered estates, is only used as a punishment for theft and other crimes; but with the cessation of the use of the whip, the name of *driver* has not yet expired—a monument of the barbarism of former times." When, however, the government at home, in 1826, urged the abolition of the whip, the Barbadian legislature declared, in reply, that *the safety of the inhabitants, the interest of their property, and the welfare of the slaves themselves*, forbade them to comply with *Earl Bathurst's recommendations to prohibit the punishment of women by flogging; and the use of the whip in the field. To forbid, by legislative enactment, the flogging of female slaves, would, in the judgment of the Assembly, be productive of the most injurious consequences.* The

power of inflicting summary punishment, by the whip, *the Assembly considers to be inseparable from a state of slavery**. Now, sir, the words in italics are officially addressed, in 1826, to the colonial department, from an island containing "a monument of the barbarism of former times." Assuming, however, the correctness of the statement, that the Society's estate is no longer worked under the whip †, and also

* Papers presented to Parliament by his Majesty's command, &c. &c. 1827. Part I. pp. 271—274. This document contains 600 closely printed folio pages.

† We had not intended to enter farther into the subject at present; but we do not think it right to permit this "assumption" of Mr. Riland's to pass without a few brief remarks, which we can fully substantiate. S. H. P. has ventured to assert that the corporal punishment of slaves, and the use of the driving whip in the field, have been abolished on the Society's estate; and he professes to ground this assertion on the evidence of the Rev. Mr. Pinder. Mr. Pinder indeed intimates, that corporal punishment is not, *in general*, resorted to on the Society's estate: but this is no more than every West-Indian proprietor is ready to assert of his own estate; and no more than the legislature of Barbadoes have said in terms still more explicit of slave estates in general. And yet that same legislature have absolutely refused to abolish the corporal punishment, even of females, by the infliction of the whip on their bared bodies. On the Society's estate, we may assume, that a minute record of arbitrary punishments by the manager is kept. Let it be produced for the last ten or twenty years, and we shall see how the account stands. But, supposing corporal punishment, at the will of the manager, were abolished, and the stocks, or the tread-mill, or some other device substituted for it, what has this to do with the *driving whip in the field*? Mr. Pinder does not, and indeed cannot say that that is abolished; and the only ground S. H. P. has for affirming it, is that he supposes the use of the driving whip in the field, to be included under the term corporal punishment, a supposition which only shews his ignorance of the subject. He ought to have known, that the use of the driving whip is no more regarded in Barbadoes as *punishment*, than the people of this country regard a coachman as *punishing* his horses, when he quickens their pace by the crack or smack of his whip, or a rider, as punishing his horse, when he goads him with the spur. Mr. Pinder is misrepresented, therefore, when he is quoted as saying, that the driving whip is

of Mr. Coleridge's assurance that the property is "remarkably flourishing," we have then a direct proof that the whip is no longer wanted

not used on the Society's estate. He says no such thing. If it has been laid aside, let it be shewn the exact date when, and by what kind of order, this most important change has been effected, and also what stimulus has been substituted for it; for even S. H. P. will hardly affirm that the Society's slaves will work without a stimulus of some kind. But we are exceeding the limits of a note; and must reserve for a future occasion our farther remarks, by which we hope to convince even S. H. P. that he and still more the venerable Society, have been kept in the dark as to the treatment of their slaves. Be it remembered, that four or five successive generations of slaves have grown up from the womb, and descended to the grave under the Society. It will remain to be seen, how many of these have grown up in civil bondage, and in moral and spiritual ignorance, living in concubinage, and even in polygamy, and driven to their labour like the beasts of the field, and as much slaves, after more than a hundred years' "preparation for freedom," as when the Society first became their owners. We are at issue with S. H. P. on these and various other points; and we shall be amply rewarded for our trouble, if we can only open the eyes of the venerable Society to the deceptions which, we are persuaded, have been practised upon them, with respect to the real condition of their dependents in Barbadoes. In the mean time, we ask only one question of S. H. P.: Can he shew that even a single Christian marriage has been celebrated among the slaves during upwards of a century that they have belonged to the Society? If he can, let him give us the number and the dates. These matters must all be promptly accessible to the members of the Society, in the documents at their office; for it would indeed shew a most culpable inattention, if every thing relative to their slave estates is not minutely registered in their books, and open for reference to all members of the corporation. There can be no reason, therefore, why S. H. P. should not tell us at once, and without waiting to send to the West Indies, how all these matters stand. We ask at present for no more than exactly such a "Synopsis" as is given of all the Society's other stations, to which a dozen pages are devoted in the last Report. Let S. H. P. present us with such a table for the last ten or twenty years. It needs not occupy above a page, and will help us materially in forming our estimate of the real condition of affairs. Does S. H. P., or does our brother Editor, think this request unreasonable?

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to support the West-India system. "The general substitution of confinement," said Mr. Pinder, in 1823, "for corporal chastisement, has been found to answer all the ends of correction." I thank the Christian Remembrancer for the opportunity it has afforded us of refuting the representations of our opponents on the great question of the whip.

2. But we are accused of implicating the members of the Society in "the guilt of being slave-holders." The members of the Society, I reply, scarcely know they have slave estates; but, of the guilt of slave-holding, Bishop Porteus says, "The Christian religion is opposed to slavery in its spirit and in its principle: it classes men-stealers among murderers of fathers and of mothers, and the most profane criminals upon earth." Mr. Burke says, "Slavery is a state so improper, so degrading, and so ruinous to the feelings and capacities of human nature, that it ought not to be suffered to exist." Dr. Paley says, "The West-Indian slave is placed for life in subjection to a dominion and system of laws the most merciless and tyrannical that ever were tolerated upon the face of the earth." The deeply learned and pious and orthodox prelate of Salisbury, Dr. Burgess, in his valuable treatise against the slave trade and slavery says; "The very existence of slavery, as long as it is permitted, must be a heavy reproach to this country, and a discredit to the age which can tolerate it. Whatever a Machiavellian in politics or commerce may urge to the contrary, slavery and the slave trade ought to be abolished, because they are inconsistent with the will of God." Bishop Horsley says; "What can the utmost humanity of the master do for the slave? He may feed him well, clothe him well, work him moderately; but, my lords, nothing that the master can do for his slave, short of manumission, can reinstate him in the condition of man. But the Negro Slave in the West Indies!—my lords, you may pamper him every day with the choicest viands—you may lay him to repose at night on beds of roses—but with all this, he is not in the conditon of *man;* he is nothing better than a well-kept horse. This is my notion of slavery." And again says Horsley; "No such slavery as that in the West Indies is to be found in Grecian or Roman history! so stolen, so transported! Who can sanction it?.....Slavery is injustice, which no considerations of policy could extenuate; impolicy equal in degree to its injustice." Speaking of the slave trade—and let the Christian Remembrancer say how wide is the link between making slaves and the *willing* retention of them, without a full intention of giving them their unalienable right of freedom at the first moment that it can be done with safety to themselves and their neighbours—Bishop Horsley says in one of his speeches in the house of lords; "Positively I affirm, that the New Testament contains an express reprobation in terms, an express reprobation of the slave trade by name, as sinful in a very high degree. The Apostle, St. Paul (1 Tim. i. 9, 10), having spoken of persons that were lawless and disobedient, ungodly and sinners, unholy and profane, proceeds to specify and distinguish the several characters and descriptions of men to whom he applies those very general epithets; and they are these, 'murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, man-slayers, they that defile themselves with mankind, *men-stealers.*' Man-stealing is placed by the Apostle in the scale of crime next after parricide and homicide. Your lordships cannot doubt, that this text condemns and prohibits the slave trade, in one at least of its most productive modes. But, my lords, I go farther: I maintain that this text, rightly interpreted, condemns and prohibits the slave trade generally, in all its modes; it ranks the slave trade in the descending scale of crime, next after parricide and homicide. The

original word which the English Bible gives, men-stealers, is ανδραποδιστης. Our translators have taken the word in the restricted sense which it bears in the Attic law; in which the δικη ανδραποδισμου was a criminal prosecution for the specific crime of kidnapping, the penalty of which was death. But your lordships know, that the phraseology of the Holy Scripture, especially in the preceptive part, is a popular phraseology; and my noble and learned friend opposite to me (Lord Thurlow) very well knows, that ανδραποδιστης, in its popular sense, is a person who 'deals in men,' literally a *slave-trader*. That is the English word, literally and exactly corresponding to the Greek. That noble and learned lord knows very well, that the Greek word is so explained by the learned grammarian Eustathius, and by other grammarians of the first authority. Although the Athenians scrupled not to possess themselves of slaves, yet the trade in slaves among them was infamous. But whatever they might think of it, we have reason to conclude, from the mention made of 'slave-trader' by St. Paul, that if any of them should ever find their way to heaven, they must go thither in company with murderers and parricides*." With the name and authority of Horsley, I beg to unite those of Dr. Johnson, who closes his memorable argument in favour of the Negroes, by saying; "No man is by nature the property of another; the rights of nature must be some way forfeited before they can justly be taken away." "My dear friend, Dr. Bathurst," said Johnson, with a warmth of approbation, "declared he was glad that his father, who was a West-Indian planter, had left his affairs in total ruin; because, having no estate, he was not under the temptation of having slaves." Dr. Bathurst died in 1762. I mention the date as shewing what was even then stirring in the bosoms of some among the countrymen of Porteus. I will only add, as respects the "guilt" of voluntarily retaining our fellow-creatures in slavery, what Mr. Southey says in his recent tale of Paraguay. The Christian Observer may have taken the epithet "guilty" from this very passage.

O foul reproach! but not for Spain alone,
But for all lands that bear the Christian name!
Where'er commercial slavery is known,
Oh, shall not justice trumpet-tongued proclaim
The foul reproach, the black offence, the same?
Hear, GUILTY France, and thou, O England, hear!
Thou who hast half redeemed thyself from shame,
When slavery from thy realms shall disappear,
Then, from this GUILT, and not till then, wilt thou be clear.

With regard to the responsibility attached to a large corporation, I fully allow the difficulty of managing distant agents, especially upon a slave estate. "A thousand Englishmen," says Mr. Coleridge, "leave England and settle on an island in another hemisphere. How shall they be governed?" Even at home such things are understood to have their difficulties. The Quarterly Review, when speaking of those archbishops, bishops, temporal peers, and other exalted personages who are patrons of the Bible Society, talks of the "want of foresight and circumspection in the ostensible guardians of public institutions." "The high and exalted personages," say they, "who lend their names for the purpose of patronising such establishments, seldom enjoy the leisure required for the due superintendance of their affairs. The management of these falls, therefore, into the hands of busy, incompetent, and interested retainers. The noble and venerable individuals who fill the stations of president and vice-presidents, are all of them entitled to the highest re-

* See Bishop Horsley's Speeches in Parliament, 1813, pp. 252, 539. The above brief extracts are detached and dismembered: his lordship's arguments should be studied in the addresses themselves as published by Mr. Hencage Horsley; their strength being much diluted by such scanty citations as those in the text.

spect, on account of their private worth; but they have allowed themselves to be deceived by artful and designing men, who have used their names as a cloak to conceal their own views and purposes. It is upon them that we call to consider seriously, ere it be too late, a system of procedure which, we are sure, minds such as theirs cannot understand without condemning. (Quart. Rev. No. 71. p. 28.) We would ask the Quarterly Reviewer and the Christian Remembrancer, to what corporation such remarks are to be limited?

I shall confine, sir, my own share of personal explanation to the above heads of accusation; the replies to which are of no further consequence, than as affecting the general question of the abolition of slavery, and the implication of a Christian society in upholding it. But I beg your permission to improve the present opportunity of stating the actual progress of reform in the island of Barbadoes; by way of inviting the Christian Remembrancer to explain, by what means the Society's Negroes have escaped the general contamination and oppression surrounding them; and in what manner the Society obtained, with such high success, a body of agents able and willing to manage a sugar estate on Christian principles; selected, as most of them must be, from the insular community. And first, with regard to *marriage*. By Parliamentary Returns (No. 353; May 9, 1826), it appears, that, during the five years ending Dec. 31, 1825, only *one* marriage took place among the 80,000 slaves of Barbadoes; and this was solemnised in the parish of St. Lucy by Mr. Harte,—*none having been celebrated before throughout the whole island!* The President tells Lord Bathurst so lately as March 14, 1826, "that there is no law existing in Barbadoes, by which the marriage of slaves is authorized or sanctioned." In what state, then, have the Society's Negroes been living, under the superintendence of their minister; who writes, that "a disposition on the side of the proprietor to impart, and of the slave to receive, religious instruction, is evident; nor can there be any doubt, but that an efficient system of religious tuition, interwoven with some judicious immunities, under the guidance of clergymen of the Established Church, through the subordinate agency of catechists, will be readily embraced by most proprietors." Reform, it would seem, yet continues to have no present tense. By a recent act, indeed (Oct. 1826), clergymen are *permitted* to marry slaves, "being the property of the same owner," and "producing the consent, in writing, of the owner;" it being also provided, that "marriages, so contracted, shall confer on the parties no privileges inconsistent with their owners' rights!" Papers, &c. Part I. 204.—By the revised consolidated slave-code, of the same date, some *new* penal inflictions, *by the whip*, on the slave are formally authorised.

In point of fact, the reformation in Barbadoes has retrograded; and will of necessity do so, while its regulations, as Burke long ago said, are "*totally destitute of an executory principle.*" On this point, Mr. Coleridge somewhat enlightens us. "In all communities," says he, "where slavery is established, there ought to be good laws to protect the slaves, and independent judges to enforce their provisions: if there be neither one nor the other, in either case one great corrective of the excesses of the free, one great guarantee of the safety of the bond, one great fountain of civilization throughout the whole state, will be lost. As long as the slave confides in the protection of a power superior to his master, he will probably labour in tranquillity; but if he finds that there is no such power, or that such power is prejudiced against him, it is nothing but an ordinary impulse of human nature, that, in case of oppression, he

should strive to obtain that by his violence which has been, or which he suspects will be, denied to his petition. In Barbadoes, the laws are administered by some twenty-seven or twenty-eight judges. They are all planters and merchants, and are appointed by the Governor: not one of them has ever been educated for the bar; nor is any previous knowledge of the law a necessary or an usual qualification for the office. They neither comprehend the extent, nor are agreed upon the validity, of the laws which they are called upon to interpret; they adhere to no fixed principles; they are bound by no precedents. It is next to impossible, in so small a community, that any cause should come into court in which some of these judges will not be directly or indirectly interested. Their ignorance, or shallow acquaintance with the duties of their office, may cause them, in moments of wrong-headedness or passion, to violate every form of law, and trample upon every principle of justice." Again, says Mr. Coleridge; "To suppose that a major-general or a rear-admiral, who depends for the best part of his pay upon the generosity of the colonists themselves, can effectually represent the office of the king in the British constitution, is quite idle. The principle of honour, which Montesquieu, with some reason, asserts to be at least a great spring of action in all constitutional monarchies, does not exist in the colonies. I use the term honour in the sense of Montesquieu, and mean nothing with regard to the conduct of individuals. The forms indeed of the English Parliament are too gigantic for the capacities of little islands; the colonists are not elevated by the size, but lost in the folds, of the mighty robe which was never destined for their use." Little must be the sagacity of that reader who does not see in the above citations from Mr. Coleridge's Six Months in the West Indies, a virtual confession of the confusion, injustice, and mercenary character of Barbadian economy. "Let not the colonists," writes Mr. Coleridge, in another part of his book, "imagine, that pieces of plate, slaughtered men of straw, nor even grants of money can divert the serious gaze of enlightened philanthropy from the very recesses of their dwellings." Of the case of Mr. Harte, a correspondent in this very number of the Christian Remembrancer writes;—"Had it been the intention of the planters, &c. of Barbadoes, to alienate from them all respectable men of all classes in this country, I am persuaded that measures more decisive in this view, than those recently taken by them, could not be devised." As a further illustration of the wretched moral state of Barbadoes, and of the superiority of the free Black and Coloured population to the Whites, it is proved, by the Parliamentary Returns of 1826, that, in five years, the paupers among the former class were *one*; and, in the latter, *one thousand and ninety-eight*. The respective numbers of the two classes are, in the former case, 16,000; in the latter, 4500. "The lower Whites of that island," says Mr. Coleridge, "are, without exception, the most degraded, worthless, hopeless race I ever met with in my life." See also his account of the White *tenantry*. Yet, one might suppose from the representations of some persons, that, on the college esta *e*, a paradise of slaves was opened in these wilds of despotism, sensuality, and practical infidelity! There may be, and I doubt not there are, improvements; but let us be made acquainted with their full extent; and especially what plan has been laid down for ultimately making the Society's slaves free labourers? Has any system of gradual emancipation been introduced? Has one day in the week, for example, been given them to work out their freedom, with a right, as their good conduct and industry prosper them, of purchasing another and another, till they have

paid the Society their price and become free?

The question now waiting a reply from the Christian Remembrancer is, In what essential degree the Negroes of the Codrington estate are treated differently from the rest of their fellow-bondsmen? Is the unborn babe one step nearer being free than its forefathers who have died slaves in the Society's service? Does the Society educate its children to be Christian freemen. As to Mr. Pinder's picture of the happiness of the slaves, I could easily give a parallel, in an account of the GENERAL TREATMENT OF THE ALGERINE CAPTIVES, supposed to be laid before the European Consuls by their superintendant, on hearing that Lord Exmouth was steering towards the Straits of Gibraltar;—"Previously to the commencement of their daily work," (I quote Mr. Pinder's words, with only a few *mutatis mutandis*, as "ramparts" for "field," "punch," for "melons," &c.) "warm tea is handed round to every individual. Their labour, from sun-rise to sun-set, is alleviated by two regular suspensions, of half an hour for their breakfast, and an hour and a half for their dinner. This latter meal is dressed for them against their return at noon; so that the interval is passed in refreshment, without care or fatigue. While occupied in the ramparts, which they have lately been strengthening, draughts of water are constantly supplied, by a person appointed for that purpose; who occasionally gives out also melons, and other juicy vegetables, which have been found particularly serviceable to some slaves, born in the north of Scotland, and who languished a little under the beams of an African sun. The bastinado is very rarely inflicted; milder punishments are found to answer all the ends of correction. Once a year, a day is given up entirely to rejoicing. They have a dance in the court of the prison; which the priests of the mosque, and other individuals are invited to witness; and a comfortable dinner is provided on the occasion. These, and various other excellent regulations, being pursued under the main direction of, &c. &c." The whole of the Barbadian statement might be as easily paralleled—the question remaining, not how slaves are treated, but how Mohammedans and Christians justify the retention of slaves? What is the doctrine of the Koran on the point at issue? Of Christianity, the Bishop of Salisbury justly observes, it does not merely "enjoin humanity to the master in the treatment of his slaves, but *it condemns him for keeping them at all.*" Lord Exmouth, however, convinced the Algerines, by arguments peculiar to his profession, that such representations were fallacious: and the consequence was, the immediate abolition of White slavery in the Dey's territories.

I am, &c. J. RILAND.

*** I trouble you, Mr. Editor, with a postscript, to say, that the Christian Remembrancer, though he is pleased "to acknowledge the politeness with which I have conveyed my sentiments," declines inserting a reply which I sent him, "as it is not his intention to enter into the general question of slavery at present." I admire his prudence; for the Christian writer, who undertakes to reconcile Barbadoes slavery with the spirit of the Gospel of our Redeemer, would indeed have a difficult task on his hands: but I am not so well convinced of his justice, in allowing an attack to be opened upon me in his pages, and shutting them against my reply, though conveyed, as he confesses, in an unexceptionable manner. But the merits of Barbadoes slavery, he must full well know, will not bear discussion: but discussed they must be—they shall be; and though the Christian Remembrancer may endeavour to confine all the "reciprocity" to one side of the argument, there are, I am persuaded, many

members of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who will not be satisfied with this prudent silence, but will institute a full inquiry, as to what has been actually achieved, in fact as well as upon paper, and what yet remains unaccomplished, towards making the Society's slaves free, and happy, and enlightened Christian servants and villagers, instead of the hopeless thrals of West-Indian bondage. I ask for nothing rash or imprudent; but let us have something specific, tangible, and ultimately effectual towards effecting the great object which the country at large demands, as the clear duty of a rich and powerful, a Christian, and a missionary corporation.—The writer in the Christian Remembrancer complains of my speaking of "the driving whip" on the Codrington estates; but as the compiler of the Society's own Reports does not scruple to allow of the slaves being designated by the term "stock," which, in England means brute beasts, and not intellectual, human, and immortal beings, he ought not to wonder if they are driven by the usual instrument employed to drive "stock" in other places.

J. R.

The following is the letter which I addressed to the Editor of the Christian Remembrancer, but which he declined inserting: –

To the Editor of the Christian Remembrancer.

Sir,—As the Editor of the Christian Observer is a party concerned in the accusations brought forward by your correspondent S. H. P. in your Number for December, I have sent him what I have to offer in reply; as far, at least, as I judged a reply to be necessary. On such extensive subjects it is easier to write volumes than paragraphs; and, on the present occasion, I have done little more than copy, in my own defence, the representations of others. It is a question of fact, and not to be determined by declamation. What use your editorial brother will make of my communication has been left, without reserve, to his own decision. You will, I trust, do me the justice to suspend your opinion both of his conduct and mine, till you have read our apology. With regard to the paper of S. H. P., I am aware that the publishers of periodical works do not hold themselves responsible for the *whole* of what they insert; and, in the example before us, I do not accuse you of authorizing the use of whatever intemperate expressions may have escaped the pen of an anonymous writer, fervent in his own cause. A question so serious cannot be affected by personalities; and I have no wish to recriminate. I think that I shall be able to clear myself of error, and certainly of intentional error; and you will sympathize with me in the hope, that from our collision will be struck out sparkles of truth and charity. My principal purpose in now addressing you is, rather to express my regret that *you*, in the responsible character of editor of a work professing to uphold the principles of our Reformed church, established, as you will admit, on a system very distinct from the despotic pretensions of the Papacy, should directly maintain opinions on slavery such, as I hoped, are becoming obsolete among all divines deriving their doctrines from the Scriptures; and interpreted, as those Scriptures are, by the formularies of the national church. This, as I think, you have done in your Review of the Rev. Daniel Wilson's Thoughts on Colonial Slavery, contained in the Amulet. You tell us, that Mr. Wilson cannot bring "a single text, either from the *Old* or the *New* Testament, which shews that slavery should not be permitted, under any circumstances." But *slavery* and *any circumstances* are such indefinite terms as not to affect the inquiry specifically connected with *West-India* slavery, as administered by the ex-

isting colonial laws and practices. It is *this* kind of slavery—I speak not of other kinds—against which the voice of the public is now directed. If it should be pleaded, that the Gospel justifies the Barbadian system, I beg at once to retire from the field. I utterly despair of obtaining any advantage against a writer shattered by defences which I should deem to be impregnable. But, in respect to the question connected with the alliance between the Scriptures and slavery, let me solicit your attention to what Bishop Horsley said, in parliament, during the debate of the 5th of July, 1799: —"My lords, I do certainly admit, that there is no prohibition of slavery in the Bible, in explicit terms, such as these would be; 'Thou shalt not have a slave,' or, 'Thou shalt not hold any one in slavery;' there is no explicit reprobation of slavery by name. My lords, if I were to say that there was no occasion for any such prohibition or reprobation, because slavery is condemned by something anterior either to the Christian or Mosaic dispensation, I could support the assertion by grave authorities—not by the authorities of the new-fashioned advocates of the rights of men—not such authorities as Vattel or Tom Paine. My lords, what is the definition of slavery in the imperial Institutes? 'Servitus est constitutio juris gentium, quâ quis dominio alieno *contra naturam* subjicitur.' And they are called slaves, *servi*; because commanders were accustomed to sell prisoners of war; and to save, *servare*, those who otherwise would have been slain. And what is the comment of Vinnius upon these paragraphs? That among Christians this institution of the law of nations is not in use, because the 'law of charity has taught Christians, that captives are not to become the slaves of the captors; that they ought not to be sold, ought not to be compelled to hard labour, nor to submit to many other things in the servile condition.' The Christian religion gives out general principles, which will work an amendment by degrees; and trusts for the eradication of moral evil to the slow and silent operation of those general principles. But, my lords, if you will conclude that whatever is not expressly prohibited or reprobated in the Holy Scriptures, is sanctioned by them, the inference will be extravagant and dangerous. Because the Christian religion positively enjoins, as it does enjoin most positively, the submission of the individual to the existing government, be it what it may, or in what hands it may; would your lordships infer, that the Christian religion gives its sanction to the injustice and oppressions of Nero and Caligula? Yet, my lords, to all this the argument goes, if from the no-condemnation of any thing in holy writ, we are to conclude the approbation of it; and, by consequence, the innocence of the practice."—"Beware, my lords, how you are persuaded to bring under the opprobrious name of fanaticism the regard which you owe to the great duties of justice and mercy; for the neglect of which, if you should neglect them, you will be answerable at that tribunal where no prevarication of witnesses can misinform the judge—where no subtilty of an advocate, miscalling the names of things, 'putting evil for good, and good for evil,' can mislead his judgment*." —In the debate of the 24th of June, 1806, the bishop trod over the same ground; arguing also the essential difference between the servitude of the Jewish Theocracy, and the slavery of the British colonies; and adding, "But have we any prohibition of the Slave Trade in the New Testament? None, my lords; absolutely none; and for the same reason, the crime, in its modern shape, was unknown in the times of the promulgation of the Gospel†."—Bishop Horsley, I am aware, was

* "Speeches in Parliament, &c." 1813. pp. 247. 257.

† p. 538.

referring more immediately to the *trade in slaves*, but I am anxious to be instructed, how many degrees—may I call it of *guilt*?—are interposed between such as kidnap, or purchase Negroes, and such as compel these Negroes, when in their possession, to work their estates, whether under the lash, or even by the stimulus of milder penalties? *This* is the main inquiry which demands the attention of the trustees of Codrington college. Few of them, it is imagined, would accept the devise of valuable property in the shape of a Roman-Catholic or Unitarian Chapel; and with the understood condition, that high rents would continue to be paid, from the punctual attendance of large congregations assembled under the faithful successors of Bellarmine and Priestley; and that the proceeds, after necessary expenses, should be devoted to the propagation of the Gospel. They would be startled at the very mention of such a legacy, and might consider it as a kind of posthumous insult, to be repelled by feelings which would turn contempt into virtue. The justice of the parallel must be left to the decision of casuists not immediately concerned in the present controversy. If any modification of West-Indian slavery could soften it into something really like the servitude of patriarchal times, when, as Horsley again says, "Abraham's confidential slave, sent to choose a wife for his master's eldest son, found the lady designed by providence to be joined in marriage to so great a man as Isaac, in the laborious office of drawing water for her father's cattle; and the slave of Abraham, that came upon this happy errand, was received by the parents of the bride with all the respect and hospitality with which they could have received his master;" or, if the Barbadian system were assimilated to the slavery of the heroic ages, "when the slave and the free-born lived so much upon a footing, that you could hardly distinguish the one from the other; when the Princess Nausicaa took a part in the labour of her female slaves, and the slave girls, when the common task was finished, were the play-mates of the princess;" or, if the bondage of the colonies were as gentle as the indigenous slavery of Africa, where between owners and domestics there is no external distinction: "they are dressed alike, they are fed alike, they are lodged alike, and they are all employed alike; the master cannot legally sell his domestic slave, unless for crime, and with the consent and approbation of the family*:" IF these things could be! But as things really are, "I scorn," as Mr. Coleridge says, "with an English scorn the Creole thought that the West-Indian slaves are better off than the poor peasantry of Britain: they are not better off; nothing like it; an English labourer with one shirt is worth, body and soul, ten Negro slaves, choose them where you will†." To the same effect speaks Bishop Horsley: "My lords, with concern and indignation I have heard it argued in this house, that under the kind treatment of the planters, the Negroes live as comfortably as our own peasantry‡."

I bring these two witnesses into court, as affording perfectly unsuspicious evidence to the fact, that the vice of the colonial system is incurable, and that the most benevolent endeavours, on the part of the society, will be nugatory, till the entire policy of the West Indies is altered.

While *we* who profess and call ourselves Christians, and members of one and the same church, attach ourselves, ostensibly in the spirit of favouritism, to our selected societies—divided, also, from each other by such questions as that before us—and while, in this manner, we rend the seamless robe

* "Speeches, &c." pp. 242, 3.

† "Six Months in the West Indies." 2d Edit. p. 303.

‡ "Speeches, &c." p. 522.

of Christ, how melancholy is the consideration that the infidel by-stander is all the time watching our movements, and reporting, among our worst enemies, the discords of those who ought to assist each other in unity of spirit! I will not shrink from an avowal of the opinion, that the college estate in Barbadoes is, at present, stained by the moral pollution of the general system. Its slaves may, or may not be, far happier than they appear in Mr. Pinder's sketch. I do not impeach its correctness, *as far as his daily personal inspection brings him acquainted with facts;* but if—as in all similar circumstances must, more or less, be necessarily the case—he depends upon the reports of subordinate agents, he is liable at least to take things upon trust; and who will say that all who do the under-work of superintendency are invariably worthy of confidence? We are aware, at home, of the impositions practised upon the heads of families by their domestics, and upon public bodies by their inferior officers; and it is not extravagant to assume, that, in what Mr. Coleridge calls "the land of effeminacy, emasculation, and vice" (p. 328), the general suspicion of mankind about the unfaithfulness of inferior agents, may receive some degree of illustration. Allowing, however, that the Codrington slaves are in the highest state of colonial felicity, they have certainly a mark round their necks, indicating their yet being in bondage: they are not free men; and so far they are, they must be, unhappy. They are tethered within a certain enclosure, and, unquestionably, work by constraint for their owners, whatever be the stimulus to industry or the penalty of idleness. A sick man is sick, although he may toss on beds of eider-down, and have at command all the powers of Ude. He has, indeed, his moments of excitement; but his happiness soon retires before the succeeding languors.

As the name of Bishop Porteus has been introduced on this occasion, I beg leave to remind you, sir, of the share he took in the debate of the 24th of June, 1806. when he fought in the same ranks, with the same weapons, and with the same success, as his lordship of St. Asaph. Of the slave trade, he declared, that the assertion of it being countenanced by Christianity was "one of the greatest libels ever published against that religion. But it is said there is no inhumanity in the African trade; for that, practically speaking, we are doing the slaves on the coast of Africa a great kindness, by taking them from an infinitely worse condition than that in which we place them—that we save the Negroes from death, by carrying them to our plantations. Now, my lords, supposing that to be the case, I think you give them no blessing for it; because I think that perpetual slavery is worse than death*."—I leave these remarks, sir, to your own consideration, as connected with your apparent wish, the opening of a new traffic in slaves with the Ashantees. Allow me to repeat, at this point, the anxiety of the abolitionists to be taught the different measures of criminality between the buyers and the stealers of men. If, indeed, we can be positively assured that ten thousand Negroes, purchased of the king of the Ashantees, shall, immediately on their arrival in the West Indies, and *after a middle passage of tranquil enjoyment*, be placed in the circumstances you describe; namely, under "civil regulations for their well-being, rendered as salutary as the wit of man, enlightened by the beams of the Gospel, can devise—exchanging *idolatry* for the *religion of Jesus;*"—if this were really done by colonial agents, who would merge every other feeling in a wish purely to make the miserable happy, and t bless the bondsmen of superstition with the light of Revelation, I, for one, would withdraw my subscription from the Anti-Slavery, and Church Mis-

* "Substance of Debates, &c." 1806. pp, 117, 118.

sionary, and Bible Societies, and throw my sovereigns into the treasury of a new order of philanthropists, in the full confidence, that the institutions I shall then have deserted will lose also thousands of their present adherents, who will flock to another standard, and hail the commencement of a colonial Millennium. Till this splendid experiment be made, or attempted to every practicable extent by the present owners of Barbadian ecclesiastical property — for such is virtually the college estate—I am too likely to remain under the influences of that cloud of ignorance and prejudice which is said to darken the mind of an abolitionist.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RILAND.

Yoxall, Jan. 19, 1828.

P. S. The citations from Bishop Horsley are taken from an authentic Report of his Parliamentary Speeches, published by the Rev. Heneage Horsley, at Dundee, in 1813.

As the Editor of the Christian Observer has complained of the grievous dearth of information in the society's Reports, and has requested only such a synopsis as is given at large respecting *all the society's other stations*, I append the heads of that synopsis in the society's Reports. They are, 1. Name of the station; 2. The number and names of the society's agents, distinguishing whether missionaries, catechists, schoolmaster on the national system, or other schoolmaster; 3. The date of their respective appointments; 4. The salary of each; 5. The number of the population, distinguishing whether male or female; 6. The number of baptisms; 7. The number of marriages; 8. The number of burials; 9. The greatest number of communicants; and 10. The number of scholars, distinguishing whether male or female. It surely will not be said that these particulars are not on the society's books, in reference to their own slaves, when they give minute lists of all of them in every Report, for every other station. To these, in the case of a slave estate, ought of necessity to be added some others, such as those specified in my advertisement prefixed to this pamphlet, and in the Editor of the Christian Observer's note at page 5 of it. It will be consoling to learn, that *many* of these particulars are satisfactory; but chiefly so, as a basis for the safe and speedy emancipation of the slaves, under a wise and equitable system, calculated as much to do honour to the society, and to bring down the blessing of God upon their labours, as to benefit the slaves themselves.

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